

TALES FROM THE

K 47400

TOMES

MAR
1973

60¢

A 'CHILLERAMA' OF
BLOOD-DRAINING
HORROR

BLOOD-SUCKER

THE OPEN GRAVE

A SUPER
SHOCKER

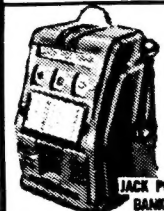




KING KONG

This full size wall poster is terrifying enough to be beautiful. Your room or den NEEDS this famous movie favorite—complete with steely, glinting eyes, and man-eating teeth. There is also the terrible Beast from 20,000 fathoms who terrified the country—a perfect companion for King Kong.

Item 659K.....King Kong.....\$1.00
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No. 239 Only 50c

"YAKETY YAK" SKULL

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No. 137 25c



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5 Slices to a pack.
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No. 549 25c

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Insert a blank piece of paper, turn the knob and... OUT COMES A REAL DOLLAR BILL! Insert the dollar and it changes to a \$5 then the \$5 changes to \$10. A135 1.25



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NO. FL5.....\$1.00



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ONLY \$1⁹⁹ What man wouldn't enjoy spending a night with Raquel Welch? Well, we can't deliver her, but we can deliver that best thing—a 12" x 24" inflatable pillow of Raquel made of rugged vinyl to serve as your headrest. Keep her for yourself or show her to your friends. Lives up to party when everyone sees and feels this great item.
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WITH "SILENCER" PUMP ACTION
This hard hitting, quick action repeater fires pellets as fast as you can pull the trigger. Its authentic western style pump action with realistic "silencer" and extra large magazine makes this short rifle perfect for target practice. FREE: a generous supply of pellets and targets. Money back if not satisfied. Send only \$2.55 plus 50c for postage and handling to:
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only \$2⁹⁵

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★ BADGE ★ CARRYING CASE ★ SPECIAL I. D. CARD



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This professional type detective badge kit and case includes an extra heavy silvered nickel badge for use by private and special investigators PLUS authentic-type case and I.D. Card. Impress your friends with this official looking novelty. No. 860...\$2.75



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7 FEET TALL EYES GLOW IN THE DARK

This 7 foot tall "BONEY THE SKELETON" is scary enough at any time—but wait till you see him in the DARK in all his horrible, spine chilling grandeur, eyes glowing like fiery coals. If you like to haunt houses or frighten friends, this is for you! Or hang "Boney" in your room or to liven up a party. No. F200 \$1.00

WHOOPEE CUSHION

Place on a chair under a cushion, then watch the fun when someone sits down! It gives forth embarrassing noises. Made of rubber, and inflatable. A scream
No. 247 50c



SURPRISE PACKAGE
Are you willing to take a chance? We won't tell you what you get, but, because you're willing to gamble, we'll give you more than your money's worth.
No. 878 Only 50c

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Please add 25c to total order for postage and handling.
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NAME
ADDRESS
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TALES FROM THE TOMB

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© ALL THE SINS OF
MAN, NONE CORRODES
THE SOUL LIKE GREED...
FOR ONLY GREED GROWS
INTO A NUMBING
HORROR...

SATAN'S STONE!

ON A STICKY SUMMER EVENING, A REPULSIVE WOMAN
STANDS BEFORE JEWELER FELIX SCHILLER....

WHAT IS
IT, OLD
WOMAN?

YOU SHALL BE MORE FRIENDLY WHEN
YOU SEE WHAT I HAVE **BROUGHT!**

BEHOLD! A **DIAMOND!**
A GLITTERING, PERFECT
BLUE-WHITE
DIAMOND!

LET ME SEE
IT! HOW IT
SPARKLES!



YES! IT IS PERFECT!
PERFECT! WHAT A
MARVELOUS GEM!

IT IS A GEM OF...
UNTOLD WONDERS!



WHAT IS YOUR **PRICE**,
OLD WOMAN? I'LL PAY
YOU **ANYTHING!**

YOU HAVE
PAID FOR IT
ALREADY!



WHO ARE YOU? WHY
HAVE YOU BROUGHT
ME THIS...**DEVIL'S**
DIAMOND?!

FOOL! YOU ARE A
FOOL LIKE ALL THE
OTHERS! I SHALL TELL
YOU OF THIS GEM...



AS THE JEWELER CONTINUES TO EXAMINE THE
DIAMOND, A **STRANGE** AND **TERRIFYING** CHANGE
BEGINS TO TAKE PLACE IN HIS APPEARANCE...

I CAN'T TAKE MY EYES
AWAY FROM IT! IT'S LIGHT
IS LIKE...A **RAY** FROM
HEAVEN!

...PERHAPS
"HEAVEN" IS
NOT QUITE
CORRECT...



WHAT DO YOU M....
YAH-H-H-H!

THERE! YOU CAN SEE THAT
YOU OWE ME NOTHING! I
COULD NEVER SELL MY
PRECIOUS DIAMOND
TO...**ANYONE!**



THIS DIAMOND IS OF **RARE** ORIENTAL ORIGIN...
ITS RAYS **DESTROY** THOSE CAUGHT IN THE
GREED OF **POSSESSION!**



SUDDENLY, THE JEWELER TURNS ON HER...

SO BE IT! IF I AM TO BE DESTROYED, THEN SO SHALL YOU!! DIE!!

AAA- GGHH!

AH, MY BEAUTY! SHINE ONLY FOR ME! AND WHEN YOU SHINE ON, OTHERS, **EAT AT THEIR FLESH** AS YOU HAVE MINE!

SEVERAL DAYS LATER...

I AM MOST INTERESTED IN **VERY RARE GEMS!**

THE YOU SHALL **SEE** THE FINEST!

AHHH! WHAT A **SUPERB** DIAMOND! EVERY PART IS.... **PERFECT!**

I AM AFRAID THE PRICE IS MUCH LARGER THAN YOU THINK...IN FACT...



GAZE UPON THE COST IT HAS EXACTED FROM YOU! IS IT WORTH IT??

MY **FACE!!** WHAT'S HAPPENED TO MY **FACE?**

HORRIFIED AND UNBELIEVING, THE MERCHANT FLEES LIKE A **DEMON POSSESSED!**

HA! HA! HA! HA!



AS THE DAYS PASS, THE JEWELER, BRINGS MORE AND MORE VICTIMS INTO HIS TERRIBLE **BROTHERHOOD OF GREED!**...

UTTERLY BEAUTIFUL!
AND YET IT FEELS SO
STRANGE...ALMOST
AS IF IT WERE
ALIVE!...



...DISGUST FOR SUCH
AS **YOU...** AND **I!!**
BEHOLD!!

WH... **ARGH-H-H**



WITH MANIACAL PERSISTENCE, SCHILLER WREAKS THE **CORRODING** POWER OF THE DIAMOND UPON ALL WHO WISH TO GAZE UPON IT...



AND THEN ONE EVENING...

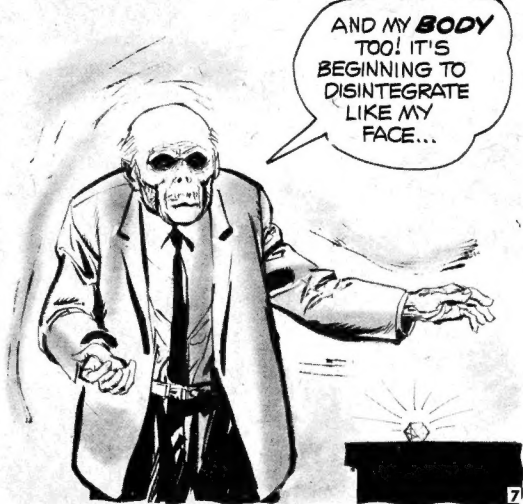
YOU HAVE SERVED ME WELL,
OLD WOMAN! YOU HAVE
GIVEN ME YOUR KNOWLEDGE
OF THE **HUMAN HEART!**
GREED RULES THE
WORLD!



...MY **HANDS!!**
THEY'VE WITHERED AWAY
INTO **HIDEOUS**
CLAWS! I DIDN'T
NOTICE!



AND MY **BODY**
TOO! IT'S
BEGINNING TO
DISINTEGRATE
LIKE MY
FACE...



BUT IF MY BODY **CRUMBLES**, THEN I SHALL LOSE THE **DIAMOND!** WHEN I AM A **SKELETON--** THEY WILL COME FOR IT!!

HORRIFIED BY THE THOUGHT OF THE **CREEPING DEATH**, THE JEWELER SITS, CLUTCHING THE **DEVIL'S DIAMOND!**

THEN ONE NIGHT, THE GREEDY VICTIMS OF THE DIAMOND SUDDENLY APPEAR!

I-- **CAN'T--MOVE!**--I CAN ONLY SIT HERE--BUT I'LL NEVER GIVE IT UP! **NEVER!**

THERE HE IS! HOW HE **SMILES** TO THINK THE DIAMOND IS HIS! WE SHALL HAVE THE **LAST LAUGH** TONIGHT!

WH- WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME NOW? I HAVE **NOTHING** FOR YOU!!

IN A MATTER OF MINUTES YOU SHALL BECOME A FETID **CORPSE--** AND THEN THE DIAMOND WILL BE **YOURS** NO LONGER!!

LIKE **BIRDS OF PREY** PLUCKING AT A HUMAN BODY, THE MEN DANCE ABOUT THE DYING SCHILLER, THEIR EYES FASTENED ON THE **GLITTERING DOOM** IN HIS WITHERING HANDS!

NEVER! THE DIAMOND IS **MINE!** THE DIAMOND IS M----**AAGH-H-H!**

NOBODY ELSE SHALL HAVE IT! IT BELONGS TO **ME!**

NO!! IT'S **MINE!**

AND THEN AN **UNHOLY** BATTLE BEGINS... AS THE DESPERATE AND DYING CREATURES USE ALL THEIR WANING STRENGTH IN A **MAD DESIRE** FOR THE DIAMOND!..



I'VE GOT IT!

MINE!

MINE!

AT LAST!! I HAVE IT! **NOBODY** SHALL EVER TAKE IT FROM ME! **NOBODY!!**

BUT AS THE DEALER IN DIAMONDS SHOUTS HIS TRIUMPH, HIS DOOM SWIFTLY DESCENDS TO DEVOUR HIS BODY...



A... **HUMAN SKELETON!!** BUT HOW DID IT EVER...??



A SHORT WHILE LATER...

OH, BERNARD! IT'S BEAUTIFUL!

HARRIET! L--LOOK!! A **DIAMOND!** SOMEONE MUST HAVE **LOST** IT!



WITH THE **GREED** SHINING IN THEIR EYES LIKE THE **UNHOLY** LIGHT OF THE DIAMOND, THE YOUNG COUPLE MOVE SLOWLY TOWARDS...

LET'S NOT TELL ANYONE, HARRIET! THE DIAMOND IS **OURS!**

YES, OF COURSE!! IT'S...**OURS!!**...



The End

HE SAW IT PLAINLY: THAT MACABE SIGHT,
THAT GRISLY HOLE IN THE GROUND! IT WAS
A MIXUP IN TIME THAT MADE A SPINE-
CHILLING SIGHT...

THE OPEN GRAVE

WHOSE GRAVE?
WHY, YOU OUGHT
TO KNOW! IT'S
YOUR GRAVE!!

IT WAS JUST AN ORDINARY FALL DAY AND MEL DUNN WAS
JUST AN ORDINARY FELLOW OUT FOR AN ORDINARY DAY'S
HUNTING IN THE WOODS...

WELL...LET'S SEE
HOW THE HUNTING
IS OVER THERE!

MEL DUNN
BEGAN
CLIMBING
THE FENCE-
GATE BUT
HIS
HUNTING
CLOTHES
WERE
CUMBERSOME
AND
SUDDENLY,
HE FOUND
HIMSELF
FALLING--

NOW, I'LL
--HEY--
WHOA...

HE FELL HARD; THERE WAS A BRIEF FLASH OF PAIN IN HIS HEAD-- BUT HE SAT UP AND FELT NO BROKEN BONES, NO SPRAINED MUSCLES...

WOW--WHAT A TUMBLE!



HE CONTINUED THE HUNT, WALKING OVER THE ROLLING HILLS, AND THEN...

ONE THING ABOUT THE COUNTRY--EVEN THE GRAVEYARDS ARE ATTRACTIVE!



SOME VAGUE CURIOSITY PROMPTED MEL TO DETOUR THROUGH THE CEMETERY, AND AS HE DREW CLOSE HE SAW A LITTLE MAN DIGGING--A GRAVE...

HI--HELLO, M'FRIEND! HOW'S--GASP-- THAT GRAVE! THAT TOMBSTONE! I--I...

EH? WHY--WHAT'S THE MATTER, MISTER?



THAT TOMBSTONE--IT HAS MY NAME ON IT! "MEL DUNN-- BORN MAY 10, 1930--DIED NOV. 20, 1971!" BUT-- THIS IS NOV. 17!!



ABRUPTLY THE DAY'S PEACE WAS SHATTERED, AND MEL DUNN FOUND HIMSELF GRABBING THE GRAVE-DIGGER...

WHAT KIND OF JOKE IS THIS, OLD MAN? WHO'S BEHIND THIS?

LEMME GO! I ONLY DO WHAT I'M TOLD! YOU GOT QUESTIONS MISTER, GO UP TO THE CARETAKER'S HOUSE--ON THE HILL!



EH--HE'S LOONEY! HIS GRAVE, HE SAYS! EH--POOR FELLA--CRAZY, PLUMB CRAZY!!

MEL DUNN RACED TO THE CARETAKER'S HOUSE, AND--

CALM YOURSELF! THIS DUNN FELLOW WAS **DROWNED** FOUR DAYS AGO AND IS TO BE BURIED THIS AFTERNOON! YOU WERE A CLOSE FRIEND OF THE DECEASED?



A CLOSE
FRIEND?
ME!



HA-HA-HA-HA-- YOU MIGHT SAY
THAT!... HA-HA-HA... YEAH... A
REAL CLOSE FRIEND-- THAT'S
ME!... HA-HA-HA-- (GASP)...

MY DEAR SIR--
ARE YOU SURE
YOU'RE ALL
RIGHT? HADN'T
YOU BEST
SIT DOWN?



HERE--
LOOK OUT!
YOU'RE
FALLING!



MEL DUNN'S WORLD HAD
SUDDENLY DISSOLVED INTO
BLACKNESS! BUT THEN
THERE WAS LIGHT AND
CONSCIOUSNESS RETURNED
AND MEL DUNN OPENED
HIS EYES...

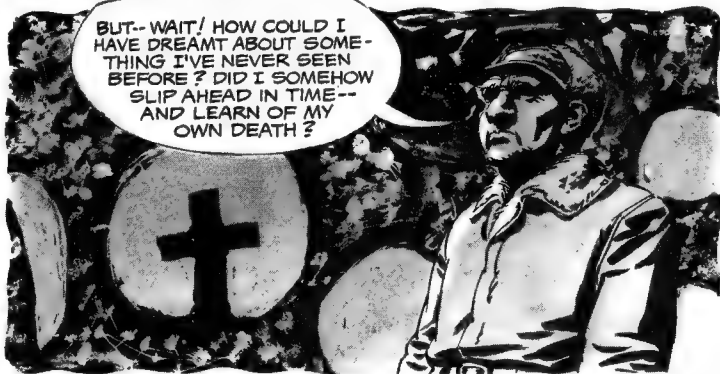
AHHH...MY HEAD THROBS,
MUST HAVE KNOCKED
MYSELF OUT--AND HAD A
HIDEOUS DREAM! OR WAS
IT A DREAM? GOT TO GET
TO THAT CEMETERY
AND SEE...



NO--HERE'S WHERE HE WAS
DIGGING! BUT THERE IS
NO GRAVE! SO IT WAS
ONLY A DREAM--A
HIDEOUS DREAM!



BUT--WAIT! HOW COULD I
HAVE DREAMT ABOUT SOME-
THING I'VE NEVER SEEN
BEFORE? DID I SOMEHOW
SLIP AHEAD IN TIME--
AND LEARN OF MY
OWN DEATH?



IT WAS A VERY SCARED, VERY
CONFUSED HUNTER WHO RETURNED
TO HIS CAR AND SAT THERE QUIETLY
FOR A MOMENT BEFORE DRIVING
HOME...



SO-- I DON'T KNOW
WHETHER IT WAS A
DREAM--OR A WEIRD
SCRAMBLE OF TIME
ITSELF! BUT I CAN
TAKE IT AS A
WARNING



MAYBE I'M LUCKY--MAYBE BY
AVOIDING THIS DEATH I'LL LIVE
FOREVER! HA-HA-- THE MAN
WHO OUTWITTED FATE! NO
WATER FOR ME TODAY!
HA-HA-HA-HA...



Maudie Hargreaves

OH-OH! OCEANSIDE CLIFF
COMING UP, I'LL PUT THE
BRAKES ON ALL THE WAY
FOR THIS ONE! I-- THE
BRAKES! THE BRAKES!
THEY'RE NOT
WORKING!!



I CAN'T STOP!! IT'S
OUT OF CONTROL! I--I
WON'T MAKE THE
CURVE!



YAAAAA!
THE DREAM
WAS TRUE!
"DROWNED!"
YAAAAAA!



MEL
DUNN
BORN MAY 10, 1930
DIED NOV. 20, 1957

The End

the bloody bookworm



■ HIS PASSION, I have reason distinctly to remember, was old books, first editions which he had bound in a manner indicative of their contents. But how long he had been a victim of this lust I have never found out. This much is certain: he made the bulk of his wealth during our war for democracy, so much money that he must have found it puzzling to devise ways of spending his income.

He was not what you would call a cultured man, for he had absurdly ungrammatical lapses. Then there was the manner in which he furnished his apartment on Fifth Avenue, not far from the Public Library with its two supercilious looking lions out in front. But the fact that he was a very powerful person gave currency to his speech. His power was not physical (for he was shrunken, stoop-shouldered, and nearly bald); it lay in the hard, brilliant light which shot from his old green eyes.

It is very likely that he took to old books, not from a love of literature, but from an avaricious desire to have a corner on something that was exceedingly scarce; and that this urge came to him after his reaches had reached the peak of their pyramid. Not content with rarity, he made his precious objects still more rare.

As you entered his apartment (he had several rooms with a fine view, from the top floor, of an expensive office building), the pall of nothing but wine-colored plush came over you. The thick hangings before the windows were of that shade and material; likewise the portieres, the huge cushions, the heavy rug, and the

fat chairs. Never rising to greet you when you came in, he sat in the most obese of the chairs, his skinny figure arrayed in a wine-colored dressing gown with cord and tassels. It was open across the chest, showing the immaculate bosom of a stiff shirt, the glossy lapels of a dinner coat, and a reddish, scrawny neck.

He had a button near his chair which he used to summon his Negro valet. And he could push this button without your noticing that he had moved. "Evenin'," he would greet you in his rasping, unsteady voice; and before you had got seated the valet would appear with a tray on which stood a decanter and two glasses. It was good liquor and worth going after. Tawny liquor, a proof of what the mystery of nature and the genius of man can do. And as you drank, you felt the butler-valet hovering near, but not too near. He was a huge, sleek-headed man with a blobby nose and massive shoulders. His black eyes were always swimming around in their pools of white as if they would tell of things which his lips were afraid to speak.

Between drinks, the tenacious old devil would show you his books. "See this 'un? . . . Forgot," he would mumble. "Reckon I showed you that," he would end as he removed a first edition of *Elsie Venner* out of the revolving bookcase which stood at his right hand.

Yes, you had seen that one. The binding was rough to the touch and there were two rows of irregular diamonds running along the cover. Very appropriately, it was bound in the skin of rattlesnakes. You also had seen the veritable whaleskin binding of the first edition of *Moby Dick*. And the exotic feathers, artfully placed, which made the cover for *Green Mansions*. You had already mused over the flaming "A" which had been worked into the heavy brocade with which *The Scarlet Letter* was bound. You had also seen the tigerskin binding of an early copy of Balzac's *Passion in the Desert*.

But now and again this ardent old bibliophile had something strikingly new to show you. As when he added *Les Fleurs du Mal* in the silky hide of a coal black cat to his library. Or when he brought out a copy of *The Idiot* encased in Russian banknotes of several generations ago. Those

sights (and the liquor) recompensed you for being shown such obvious acquisitions as *Beautiful Joe* in dogskin, *Black Beauty* in horsehide, *The Origin of the Species* in the covering of an ape . . .

What trouble and pains he went to in order that his passion might be satisfied! One evening, after the customary greeting from his armchair and the customary drink from the glistening decanter, he reached toward his revolving case and his skinny fingers closed over a new volume.

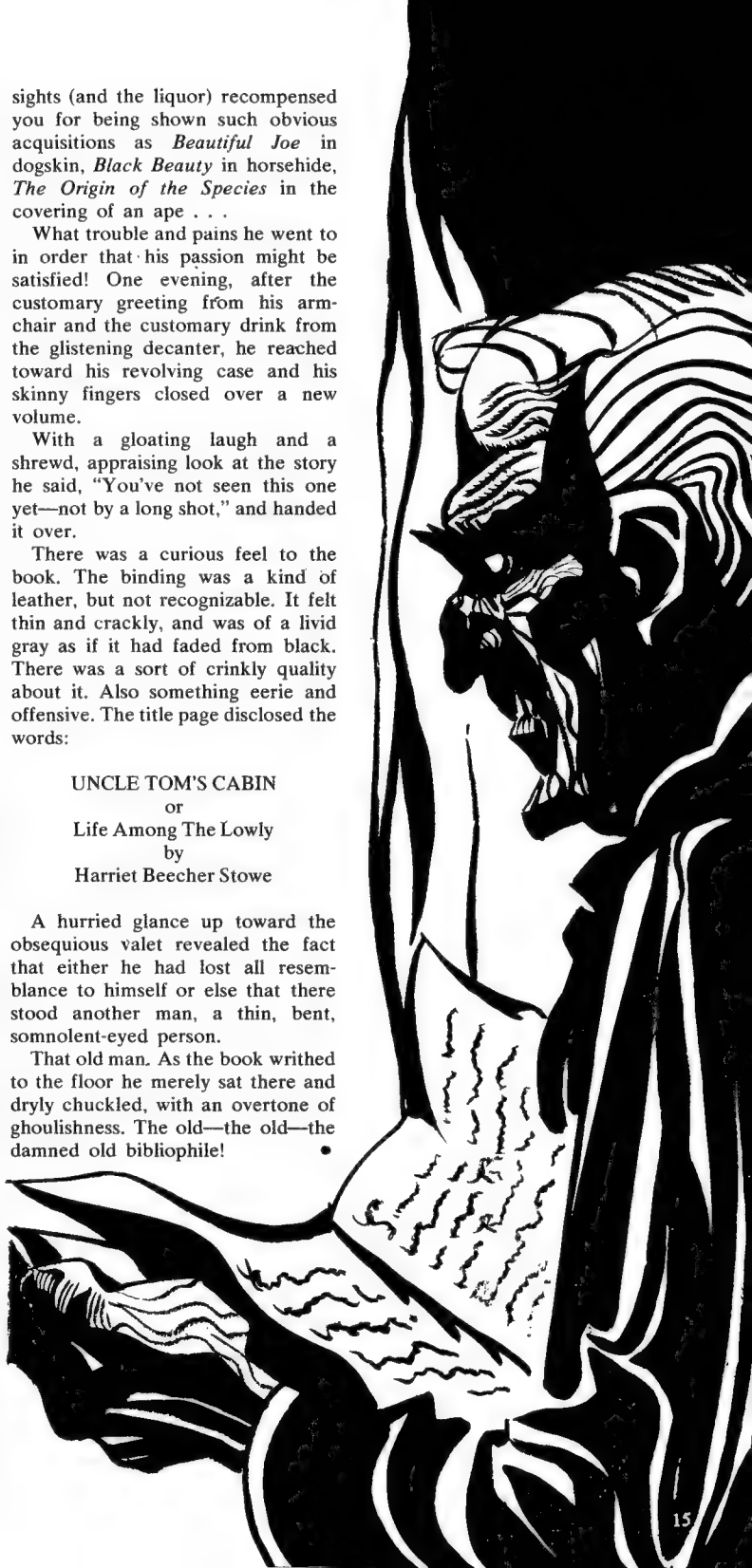
With a gloating laugh and a shrewd, appraising look at the story he said, "You've not seen this one yet—not by a long shot," and handed it over.

There was a curious feel to the book. The binding was a kind of leather, but not recognizable. It felt thin and crackly, and was of a livid gray as if it had faded from black. There was a sort of crinkly quality about it. Also something eerie and offensive. The title page disclosed the words:

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN
or
Life Among The Lowly
by
Harriet Beecher Stowe

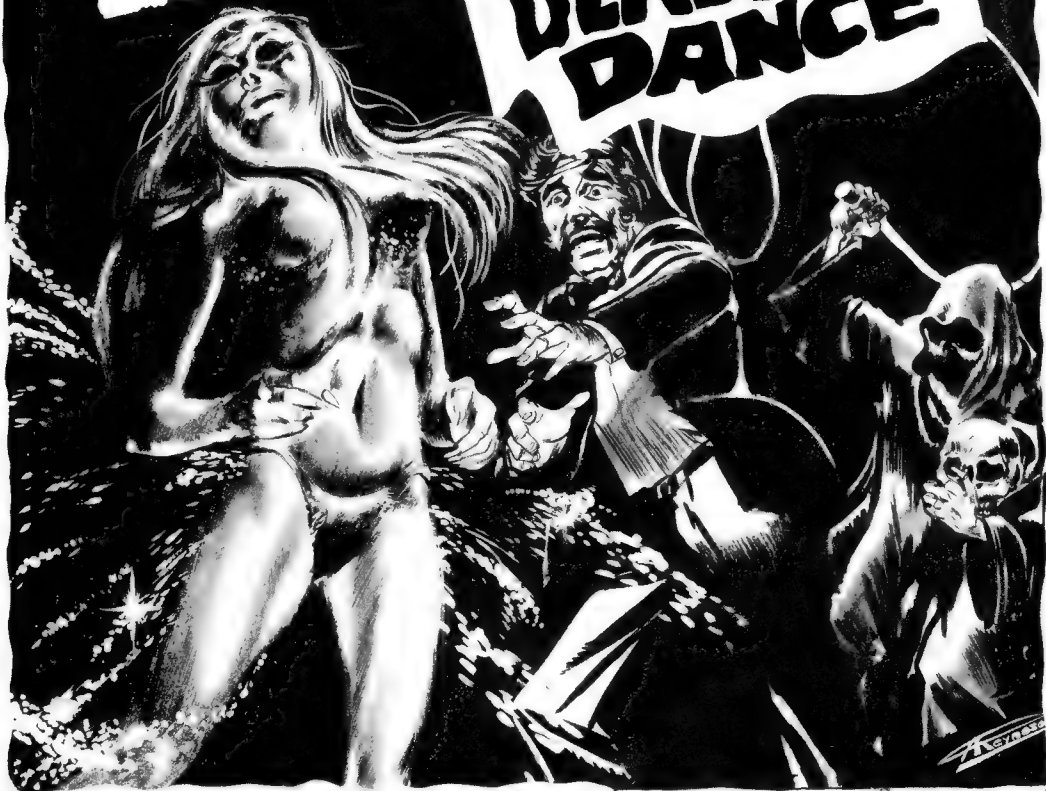
A hurried glance up toward the obsequious valet revealed the fact that either he had lost all resemblance to himself or else that there stood another man, a thin, bent, somnolent-eyed person.

That old man. As the book writhed to the floor he merely sat there and dryly chuckled, with an overtone of ghouliness. The old—the old—the damned old bibliophile!



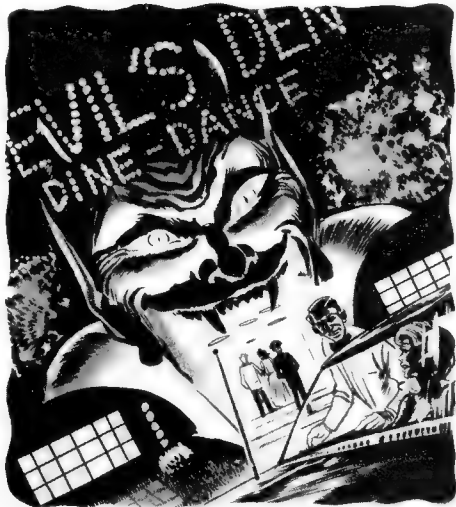
"DANCE!" SCREAMED THE FRIGHTFUL
FIGURE OF DEATH! ... AND THE FETID
STENCH OF THE GRAVE CHOKED JOHN
DRUNE'S QUIVERING NOSTRILS...
AND HE KNEW AT LAST THAT THE
MOULDERING HORROR IN HIS ARMS
WAS THAT OF DEATH!

DEADMAN'S DANCE



THEY SAID OF JOHN DRUNE, THE OWNER,
HE ALWAYS PRESENTED STARTLINGLY
DIFFERENT ENTERTAINMENT!

TO
MORBID,
HUNGRY
NIGHT
CLUB
CROWDS
THE
DEVIL'S
DEN
OFFERED
NEW
SENSATIONS
IN
ENTERTAIN-
MENT!



GOLD WAS JOHN DRUNE'S GOD AND--IT LURED HIM ALONG DARK AND SINISTER PATHS OF EVIL!

WHAT? A HUNDRED DOLLARS TO FIREPROOF ONE DANCE DRESS? I WON'T PAY IT!



WHY SHOULD I? HELEN WON'T EVEN GET NEAR THE FLAMES! I'LL BE \$100 AHEAD!



HERE'S THE DRESS, HELEN! ALL FIREPROOFED, BUT KEEP AWAY FROM THE FLAMES, IT'S DANGEROUS!

OF COURSE, MR. DRUNE!

THAT NIGHT...

LOOK AT THAT CROWD! AND NO MONEY WASTED ON NONSENSE LIKE FIREPROOFING A DANCE DRESS!

SUDDENLY, AT THE CLIMAX OF THE WEIRD CHILLING DANCE...

LOOK OUT! THE FLAME...



EEEEEE!

HELEN!

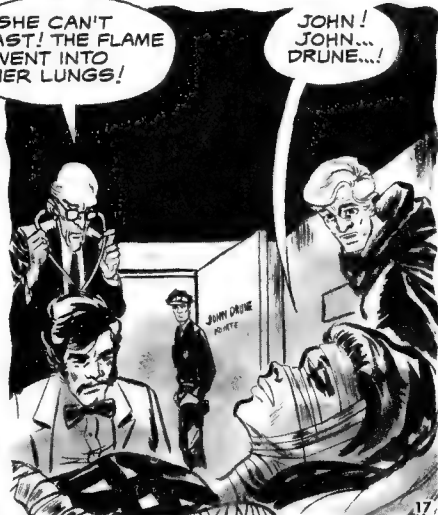
THE FOOL! THAT DRESS COST \$250!

SHE CAN'T LAST! THE FLAME WENT INTO HER LUNGS!

JOHN! JOHN... DRUNE...!



IT WAS DON WAND WHO SPRANG TO SMOTHER THE FLAMES, BUT HER SHRIEKS OF ANGUISH HAD DIED AWAY!





YOU... TRICKED ME... LIED! YOU... KILLED ME! BUT... I'LL HAVE REVENGE! AHAAA!

MURDERER!



YOU LIED ABOUT FIREPROOFING HER DRESS! YOU KILLED HER BUT I'LL KILL YOU!



I'LL KILL YOU...

MR. DRUNE WASN'T TO BLAME! IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! I SAW IT HAPPEN MYSELF!

TH-THANKS, OFFICER!



WHAT IF THIS DRIVES AWAY BUSINESS? A NASTY THING LIKE THIS COULD RUIN ME!

BUT JOHN DRUNE NEED NOT HAVE WORRIED ABOUT BUSINESS! NEXT NIGHT...

IS THIS WHERE THAT POOR GIRL WAS BURNED ALIVE? SHOW ME THE SPOT, DARLING! I LO-O-OVE CREEPY THINGS!

I SHOULD HAVE SAVED THAT DANCE DRESS! THEY'D BUY PIECES OF IT AS SOUVENIRS I'LL BET!



HOURS LATER, WHEN THE DEVIL'S DEN HAS CLOSED AND THE LAST HELP GONE FOR THE NIGHT!

AHH, THAT BEAUTIFUL BEAUTIFUL MONEY! NOW I CAN SIT DOWN AND REALLY ENJOY MY GORGEOUS PROFITS!



LOOK AT THOSE LOVELY BILLS...

EEEEAAAAHHH!





YIIII! PUT ME DOWN! WHO ARE YOU? WHAT KIND OF A TRICK IS THIS? HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE?

TRICK?



SUDDENLY THERE WAS ANOTHER FIGURE IN THE ROOM!

EEEEAAA! MY MONEY! STOP!

BLOOD MONEY! IT CAME FROM FIRE... LET IT RETURN TO FIRE!

THE GRAVE STENCH WAS CHOKING, THE RELENTLESS GRIP OF SKELETON HANDS LIKE IRON! STILL JOHN DRUNE CLUNG TO A SHRED OF SANITY!



I GET IT! THIS IS AN ACT YOU WANT ME TO HIRE! OKAY, SEE ME TOMORROW! I SIGN A CONTRACT!

YOUR CONTRACT WITH ME WAS SIGNED THE DAY YOU WERE BORN, JOHN DRUNE!



ON YOUR FEET! WE HAVE COME TO SEE YOUR DANCE OF DEATH...

YOU'RE CRAZY! IT'S ALL SOME CRAZY NIGHTMARE!



SUDDENLY JOHN DRUNE WAS RIMMED BY A RING OF FIRE!

EEEEAA! FIRE!

OF COURSE! WASN'T THAT YOUR MASTER-PIECE? THE DANCE OF DEATH IN A CIRCLE OF FIRE?



AND ANOTHER FIGURE WAS THERE BEFORE HIM... A FIGURE SO FRAUGHT WITH HORROR THAT HIS SENSES REELED!

NO! NO! Y-YOU'RE DEAD!

OF COURSE... AND YOU KILLED ME! AND NOW IT IS YOUR TURN TO DANCE WITH DEATH!



I WON'T! EEOWW!

IF YOU FIND YOUR PARTNER DISTASTEFUL... REMEMBER, YOU MADE HER AS SHE IS!

THE ORCHESTRA STRUCK UP THE STRAINS OF THE DEAD MARCH! JOHN DRUNE WHIRLED THROUGH THE MACABRE DANCE!



LET ME GO! GET AWAY FROM ME!

DO I REVOLT YOU, JOHN? YOU HIRED ME! I WAS SO BEAUTIFUL!



HELEN FELT THE SAME WHEN YOU MADE HER DANCE WITH ME!

HOLD ME CLOSER, JOHN! YOU'LL FIND ME ATTRACTIVE AGAIN WHEN YOU HAVE BECOME LIKE ME!



AFTER AN ETERNITY, THE SOBBING STRAINS OF MUSIC DIED! FROM THE TABLES CAME THE CLATTER OF BONY HANDS APPLAUDING!

CONGRATULATIONS, JOHN DRUNE! THE CROWD LIKES YOUR DANCE!



IN TERROR, JOHN DRUNE THREW HIMSELF AT THE FEET OF THE HIDEOUS APPARITION!

NO! NO! DON'T MAKE ME GO THROUGH THAT ANY MORE! I'LL DO ANYTHING... PAY ANYTHING...

BUT...

WHY, HIS FEET AREN'T MOULDERING BONES! THEY'RE SOLID FLESH...ICY COLD BUT FIRM FLESH!

OKAY! I'M WISE TO YOU, NOW! YOU WERE CUTE, BUT NOT QUITE CUTE ENOUGH!

SO YOU FINALLY DISCOVERED MY IDENTITY!





DON WAND!
YOU SWORE
YOU'D GET
EVEN WITH
ME!

AND I HAVE!
SEEING YOU
GROVEL ON THE
FLOOR, WAS THE
SWEETEST
PLEASURE SINCE
MY DEATH!



YOUR
FLESH IS
AS SOLID
AS MINE!

OF COURSE! I
ONLY JOINED
THE RANKS OF
DEATH A FEW
HOURS AGO!



SEE? I HAD
TO BE WITH
HELEN! YOU
DIDN'T KNOW
SHE WAS MY
WIFE! WE KEPT
IT SECRET!

BAH! I'VE
SEEN THAT
GIMMICK
BEFORE!
TRICK
KNIVES,
PHONY
DEATH
MASKS!



WAIT UNTIL I GET
MY HANDS ON ONE
OF FAKE SKELETONS...
AWRRK! THEY'VE
VANISHED...



HAVE YOUR FUN! BUT
YOU BURNED MY MONEY!
I'LL SEE YOU IN
FEDERAL PRISON
FOR MUTILATING
U.S. CURRENCY!



THE FEDS WILL
FIND YOU! GO AHEAD
AND HIDE, BUT THEY'LL
DIG YOU OUT!



I'LL CALL THE POLICE
AND... THE MORNING
PAPER! HOW DID IT
GET HERE? WHA...?



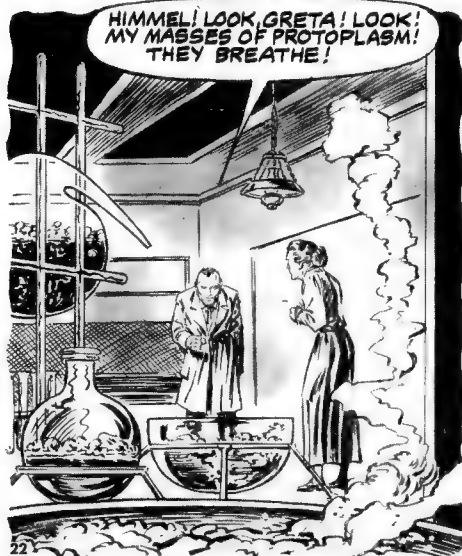
DANCER COMMITS
SUICIDE!
STABS SELF IN
GRIEF- BODY
FOUND AT
4 P.M.

JOHN
DRUNE
WAS STILL
SCREAMING
WITH THE
LAUGHTER
OF
MADNESS
WHEN
THE
POLICE
BROKE
INTO THE
DEVIL'S
DEN AT
DAWN!

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MUNICH IN THE YEAR 1871, ECCENTRIC, GENIUS, PROFESSOR CARL VON HEIMER, DISCOVERED WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS THE SECRET OF LIFE!... THE MYSTERY THAT HAS DEFIED SCIENTISTS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF TIME...



CONFIDENT, PROFESSOR VON HEIMER WENT BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY'S EXECUTIVE BOARD TO INFORM THEM OF HIS DISCOVERY! BUT...



ALTHOUGH BITTER VON HEIMER DID NOT LEAVE! ACCOMPANIED BY HIS HOUSEKEEPER, GRETA, HE TRANSFERRED HIS EQUIPMENT TO A BLEAK, MEDIEVAL CHAMBER IN THE UNIVERSITY...TO CONTINUE HIS WORK!



THEY LIVE, GRETA! THE SECRET OF LIFE IS MINE! HA-HA!



BUT, THAT EVENING, AFTER VON HEIMER HAD LEFT HIS WORK, ONE OF THE GRUESOME LIVING THINGS SLITHERED NOISELESSLY OUT OF ITS CONFINES...



AAHHGGRR...



THE NEXT MORNING...

HIMMEL!
GONE!



FEARING THE WORST, VON HEIMER RUSHES TO GRETA'S ROOM...



STRICKEN WITH SHOCK AND CONFUSION, HE LOCKS THE MONSTER IN THE ROOM...



BUT VON HEIMER'S MIND SOON ACCUSTOMS ITSELF TO THE HABITS OF HIS HIDEOUS MONSTERS!

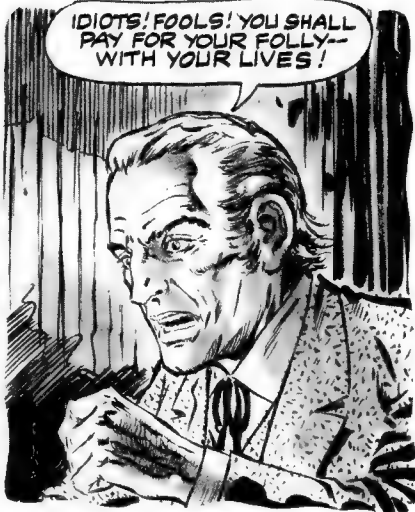


HIS PERSPECTIVE BLURRED BY TRIUMPH AND HATRED, VON HEIMER AGAIN GOES BEFORE THE BOARD TO PLEAD FOR HIS THEORIES...

FOR THE LAST TIME...NO!
IF YOU DON'T LEAVE, I'LL BE
FORCED TO HAVE YOU
THROWN IN JAIL!



IDIOTS! FOOLS! YOU SHALL
PAY FOR YOUR FOLLY--
WITH YOUR LIVES!



AND THAT EVENING, WHILE VON HEIMER SLEEPS...



BUT THE FREEZING SNOW OF THE GERMAN
WINTER IS TOO MUCH FOR THE MONSTER TO
WITHSTAND AND IT DIED SILENTLY...



NO! NO!
THE FOOL!

WITH THE DEATH OF THE ORIGINAL MONSTER...
VON HEIMER VOWS THAT HIS OTHER
CREATURES SHALL SURVIVE!

SURELY YOU WOULD
LIKE TO WATCH ME
WORK, GENTLEMEN!





YES! YOU WILL DIE! BUT FOR SCIENCE...AND FOR THE LIVES THAT I HAVE CREATED!



AIEEE!

AGGRRH...

YAGRH...

VON HEIMER WATCHES WITH FIENDISH GLEE AS HIS SAVAGE CREATURES THRIVE ON THE DIET OF HUMAN BLOOD! THEN, SATISFIED THAT THEY ARE CAPABLE OF DOING HIS INSANE BIDDING...

GO! HAVE YOUR FREEDOM-- AND MY REVENGE! YOU ARE FREE! DESTROY! KILL! THE LAUGHED AT ME, DID THEY?



SOUNDLESSLY THE OOZING HORDE ENGLUFS THE UNIVERSITY'S CLASSROOMS AND DEAL OUT ITS HORRIBLE DEATH...



YAH-H!

AIEEE...



AIEEE...

AS IF GUIDED BY THE GHOULISH VENGEANCE OF THEIR CREATOR, THE MONSTERS OOZES ITS WAY TO THE BOARD ROOM...



AIEE!

HIMMEL!



AGHRR!

AIIEEE...

BENT ON FURTHER DESTRUCTION... AND THEIR LUST FOR HUMAN BLOOD UNSATISFIED, THE MONSTERS CRAWL OFF IN MANY DIRECTIONS... SO FINDING THEIR WAY INTO THE SNOW...



HA-HA-HA! THEY REJECTED MY THEORY! SO IT HAS DESTROYED THEM!

...TO THEIR BELATED DEATH... IN SUB-ZERO TEMPERATURES... AS THE PROFESSOR LOOKS ON IN HELPLESS ANGUISH...



DON'T GO OUT THERE!



AND WITH NO OTHER LIFE REMAINING, THE CREATURES NOW TURN INEVITABLY UPON VON HEIMER HIMSELF!!



NO! NO! NOT ME! YOUR CREATOR!



THE SCHWEIN...I MUST
GET TO THE TOP OF
THE TOWER!



HIS FEVERISH BODY WRACKED WITH FEAR,
VON HEIMER ASCENDS THE STEPS TO
THE STEEPLE...



NO! NO!



AGGGHRR!!

THE MONSTERS LIVE JUST LONG ENOUGH
TO EXTRACT THE LAST OUNCE OF BLOOD
FROM HIS BODY...THEN THEY THEMSELVES
ARE DESTROYED BY THE FRIGID
ATMOSPHERE...



AND SO THE SECRET OF LIFE DIED WITH ITS
CRAZED DISCOVERER WHO LEFT NOTHING
TO SHOW FOR HIS WORK BUT HIS OWN
BLOOD-DRAINED BODY!!



THE
END

THE STRANGE HAUNT



■ In the later years of the 18th Century, Alexandria, Virginia, was a thriving seaport. A contemporary reported that "the Port of Alexandria has seldom less than 20 square-rigged Vessels in it and often many more." Ships from all parts of the world unloaded and loaded cargoes on the Alexandria docks. Incoming shipping included spices, tea, fruit, wine from Madeira, Moroccan leather, rum, Spanish Port, damasks, brocades, linens, wool, and for the cultivated gentlemen of Virginia's "Northern Neck," harpsichords and the "new-fangled" *piano-forte*. Ships left with tobacco, flour, tar, slates, iron, and dried fish. The streets of the town bore such names as King, Queen, Prince, Princess, Duke, Royal, Oronoco, and St. Asaph—as they do until this day.



Among the captains whose ships plied the seas between Alexandria and far distant ports such as St. Petersburg, Hong Kong, and that other Alexandria in Egypt, was one James Randall. Captain James Randall had been born in the old capital city of Virginia, Williamsburg. When a youth, he had run away to sea, and through his natural shrewdness and tenacity of purpose, eventually found himself captain of his own vessel, the brigantine *Chichester*.

In the 1790's, Randall bought a house near the docks of the town on the Potomac. Here his children were born, two of whom were also to become sea captains in their day.

Captain Randall was a man of considerable natural curiosity. Although in no sense a scholar, he

actively collected curios and souvenirs: Indian relics from Virginia planters of his acquaintance; carvings from West Africa, the South Seas, and China; and on his voyages to the Mediterranean he acquired ancient vases, Egyptian scarabs, and a stone fragment said to have come from the ruins of Palmyra, the Roman caravansari in the Syrian desert.

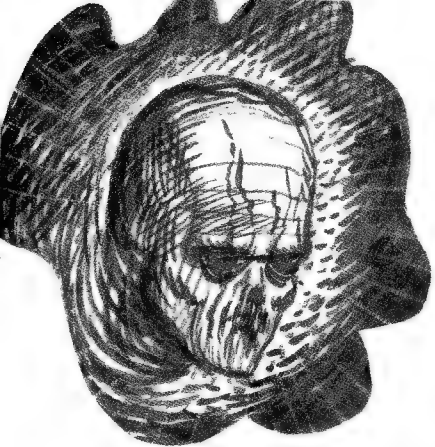
The strangest thing of all, however, was undoubtedly a large pottery burial-urn which had been dug up on the western coast of South America. This urn had been purchased for the Virginia captain by a colleague from Boston, a Captain Peters, in Valparaiso, Chile, in 1801. Peters was acquainted with his friend's interest in the odd and unusual and ancient, and this urn contained something

very much in those categories; the mummy of a man identified by superstitious Indians as that of a Nazca sorcerer—but in fact not a whole mummy, for the man had been so abhorred that after his death his corpse had been cut in two and each half buried separately! The idea was that should a ghoul be able to return from the dead, his "split personality" would prevent him from doing harm. The urn contained the lower half of this mummy, the body having been neatly severed at the waist.

This grisly souvenir soon gave excuse for being regarded as an unlucky object, a focus of misfortune.

Captain Peters, with the urn stowed in his ship's hold, died of an undiagnosed and abrupt illness.

When the urn at length came into the hands of Captain Randall, the



half-mummy within had only one leg—the left. It was explained that, shortly before his death, Peters had become delirious and spoke with feverish agitation of hearing the torsoless mummy *walking on the ship's deck at night*. He actually went so far as to rip off the mummy's right leg, throwing it into the sea, in order to prevent the lower half of the desiccated sorcerer from "walking." Within a few hours the captain was dead. There was an outcry by several of the crew to toss the urn and the remains of its charnel contents overboard; but the first mate, who took no stock of such matters, insisted that the urn was to be delivered to Captain Randall, not Davy Jones, and that no heathenish nonsense about the mummy's galavanting about the decks would interfere with that delivery. Then, if the mummy (what little was left of that pitiful chap) wanted to stroll about the streets of Alexandria—that was Randall's responsibility!

Captain Randall was nonplussed by this gift, and saddened by its connection with the death of his friend, Peters. At first he thought of burying the remaining part of the mummy, but reasoning that no familiar Christian duty obligated him to perform last rites for an evil heathen whose skin and bones were already scattered over half the Western World, he decided that it would be unnecessary for him to trouble himself thus. The urn and its anatomically-diminished occupant were therefore relegated to a corner of the cellar next to racks of dusty wine bottles, and for several months the ignominiously-handled Nazcan's carcase and its pottery tomb were forgotten.

Then one night Randall was stand-

ing by the mantelpiece in his parlor, smoking a last pipe. Something caught his attention from the corner of his eye. He turned slightly and saw, beneath a table by the window, a small, shining globe, floating silently in the air—an object about the size of an apple. He watched it dumbfounded. His pipe fell from his mouth. He stood staring at it for several minutes until it suddenly faded away—vanished into thin air. No trace could be found, though Randall was on his knees searching for it immediately upon its disappearance. It was not a burning object, but a silver-shining sphere of cold light. He first suspected something like St. Elmo's Fire, but there was no crackling sound, no smell of ozone, and nothing to indicate an electrical phenomenon.

The captain said nothing about this event at first, believing that he had possibly had one or two glasses of Port too many on that evening.

On the next night the occurrence repeated itself. Captain Randall saw the shining sphere, this time above the table, and this time it moved. Slowly, very slowly, it glided across to the middle of the room. He turned to watch it. It swelled in size: expanded until it was as large in diameter as "the end of a hog's head," and suddenly vanished like a bursting bubble, with a loud popping sound. All at once the room was pervaded by an overpowering stench—an odor of the most awful rottenness. As Randall rushed from the room in nausea (and the old sea dogs were used to some terrible smells, one might remember), he imagined hearing a faint, cackling laughter that turned his blood to ice.

On the following night, not one, but numerous shining spheres appeared in the house. Captain Randall, this time with his wife as witness, watched another shining globe appear over the table and float to the room's center. It burst, or seemed to burst, with the same loud popping noise. Again there was a stench, but before the captain and Mrs. Randall could flee the room, both saw a monstrous, shriveled-brown *face* appear where the sphere had been—and the face tittered and snickered most disgustingly.

Minutes later, the children upstairs cried out. Their parents found them

in the hallway, frightened and tearful at the shining balls that had, according to their account, been sailing through their rooms, whizzing and popping and going right through the walls.

Pacifying the children, the captain and his wife retired, intending that on the morrow a clergyman should be brought to make inquiry into these unsettling apparitions that were confounding the Randall household.

But that night, the captain slept little. Whether in dream or waking he could not tell (it was in that borderland betwixt sleep and consciousness), there came a sound. It was a simple sound, unfamiliar, yet he *knew* it only too well! Up the stairs, over the floor of the hall, there came a bumping, bumping—a sound like that of a one-legged man hopping on his only remaining foot, a foot swathed in cloth, a foot such as should not be a living foot . . .

Captain Randall woke in sweat, rushed to the door, but the hallway was empty, and still as the tomb—he cursed the simile . . .

On the next morning, in the bright, cleansing sunlight and pure air of day, Randall removed the urn from the cellar, presumably riding off to bury it, no one knows where. That afternoon he returned, trembling, his hair showing unwonted traces of gray.

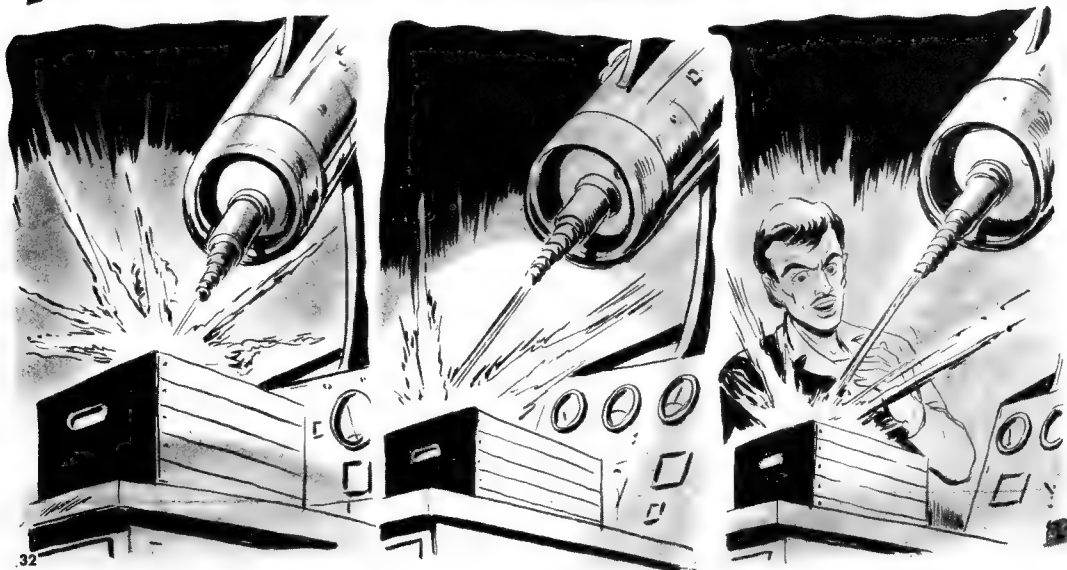
The shining globes were seen no more, the bumping up the stairs was never heard again.

Captain Randall and his ship were lost at sea the following year—off the coast of Peru, I've been told, but I suspect that that detail may be embroidery on the story. In 1903, yellow fever visited Alexandria, almost wiping out the population, and signaling an end to its vitality as a seaport. Mrs. Randall died of the fever, but the surviving children, Jason, Alexander, and Amelia, were adopted by a cousin in Philadelphia. The Randall house, in whose cellar a gruesome visitor had lodged, was torn down in the decades following the Civil War. The story of Captain Randall is almost impossible to get first-hand nowadays, although a few old-timers may remember it. It is among those uncommon pieces of local legendry: a horrifying story that no one seems to care about repeating.



THE DEVIL'S MACHINE

THE NEEDLE SPUTTERS AND... THE BOX GETS SMALLER... AND SMALLER!!!



LOOK AT IT! LESS THAN HALF THE ORIGINAL SIZE! HOW DOES IT WORK?

IT'S SIMPLE! JUST A RAY THAT REARRANGES THE STRUCTURAL MOLECULES IN AN OBJECT TO CHANGE THE OBJECT TO ANY SIZE I DESIRE!

CAN'T YOU SEE WHAT IT'LL MEAN IN SPACE TRAVEL? HEAVY CARGO CAN NOW BE REDUCED TO THE SIZE OF A WATCHBOX AND RESTORED TO ORIGINAL SIZE AT DESTINATION!

I SEE A FORTUNE IN IT FOR US!

NEVER! HOW CAN YOU THINK OF PERSONAL GAIN WHEN WE HAVE THE ANSWER TO WHAT LIES BEYOND THE STARS!

OKAY! OKAY! JUST A LITTLE IDEA THAT'S ALL!

I HAVE TO GO OUT FOR A WHILE, JONAH! KEEP AN EYE ON THINGS UNTIL I GET BACK!

SURE!

THE FOOL! CAN'T HE SEE WHAT THIS MACHINE MEANS? AND HE'S WILLING TO GIVE IT AWAY!

DEEP IN THOUGHT, JONAH WAS TOO ENGROSSSED TO NOTICE WHERE HIS HAND HAD STRAYED!

I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING TO GET THAT MACHINE AWAY FROM HIM... BUT HOW?



WHEW, IT'S GETTING WARM IN HERE! SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED TO THE AIR CONDITIONER!



MY HANDS... THEY'VE SHRUNK! THE RAY, IT'S ON!



I CAN'T TURN IT OFF! I CAN'T REACH THE SWITCH!



WATER..

HMM! MUST'VE LEFT THE RAY ON IN MY EXCITEMENT! HEY, THERE'S JONAH'S SANDWICH.. WONDER WHERE HE WENT?



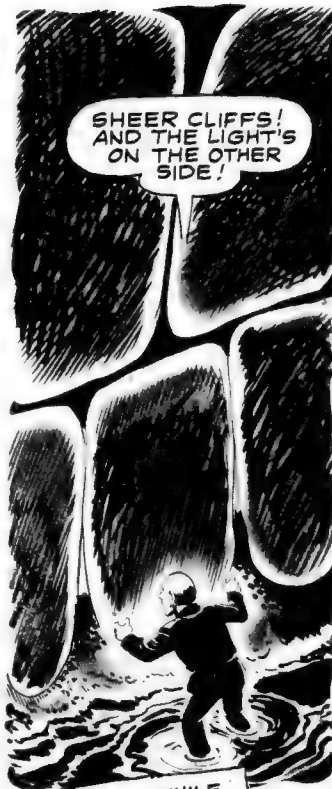
WELL, THERE'S NO SENSE LETTING IT GO TO WASTE! I'LL EAT IT! JONAH WON'T MIND!



WHAT IS THIS? HOW DID I GET IN HERE... GOT TO DO SOMETHING BUT FAST!



MADE IT--AND THE WATER IS RECEDING!



MEANWHILE...

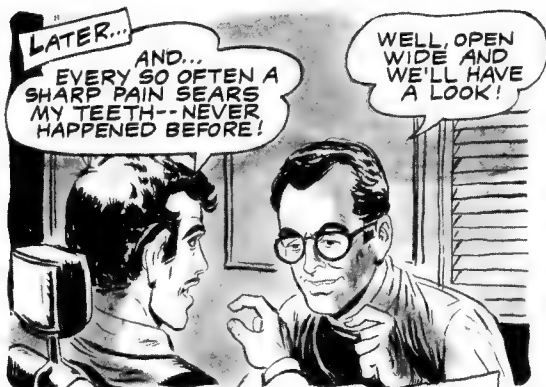
OWWWW! THERE GOES
THAT TOOTH AGAIN! I'D
BETTER GET TO A
DENTIST ONE OF
THESE DAYS!



THOSE
CLIFFS
ARE
TOO SHEER
TO CLIMB.
BUT THIS
RAY GUN
CAN BLAST
STEPS INTO
THEM!







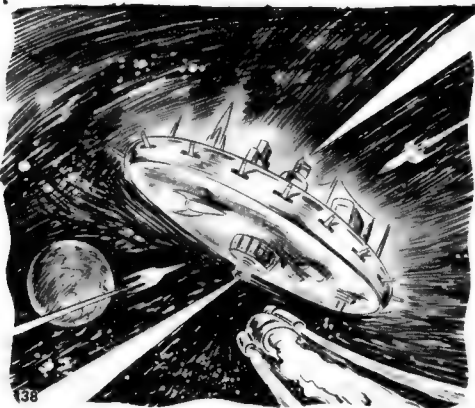
TERROR ON STATION ONE!



THIS IS SPACE STATION ONE-- A GREAT METAL WORLD SUSPENDED IN A MAGNETIC ORBIT ABOUT THE EARTH! HERE CRUISERS BOUND FOR SPACE MUST LAND AND TAKE OFF... THE SPACE TRAVELLER'S HUB...

ON THAT METAL WORLD, A SHADOWY FIGURE ENTERS THE QUARTERS OF SPACE LIEUTENANT DAV FALLON...

FALLON SLEEPS! HE WILL BE DEAD BEFORE MY FINGERS RELEASE THE TRIGGER OF MY BLASTER!



BUT... A TOOTHACHE HAS KEPT
DAY FALLON FROM SLEEPING
THIS NIGHT AND...

OOH! THIS TOOTH--
WHA--? A VENUSIAN
IN MY ROOM!



...THEN THE BURNING FURY
OF AN ATOMIC BLASTER...

SINGED MY HAIR...
BUT MISSED
ME!



OOM LAH! DOES
COMMANDER
SLAR KAN
KNOW OF
THIS...?

YOU DIRTY
EARTHER...OF
COURSE HE
KNOWS! HE LEADS
THE REBELLION
AGAINST...



REBELLION, HUH?
YOU FOOLS...YOU'LL
NEVER LEARN!

A BETTER DESCRIPTION
WOULD BE SPACE
PIRATES AND
CUT-THROATS!



AS DAY FALLON OPENS HIS DOOR...

DAY! (SOB!) THEY HAVE
CAPTURED THE SHIP!

... WE NEED
A HOSTAGE!

KATHI!



YOU FOUL SLUG!
STAY AWAY FROM
HER!

IT'S A REVOLT, DAY!
SLAR KAN HAS VENUSIANS
IN ALMOST EVERY POST
ON THE STATION!



EVERY EARTHMAN AND
GIRL HERE RAYED
DOWN WITHOUT
A CHANCE!

IF VENUSIANS
CONTROL THE
SPACE STATION...
THEY CAN ALSO
CONTROL THE ENTIRE
GALAXY!...AND NOBODY
CAN STOP THEM!



EVEN THE WORLD IS HELPLESS BELOW US, KATHI! CITIES ARE UNPROTECTED! TEEMING WITH MILLIONS OF PEOPLE...DEPEND-
ING ON US!



BUT WHAT CAN WE DO, DAV? ONE MAN AND ONE GIRL...AGAINST ONE HUNDRED VENUSIAN KILLERS!

SUDDENLY A HAND SHOOTS FROM THE SHADOWS!



OH!!

M'SIEU FALLON...M'A'M'SELLE KATHI! C'EST MOI...ENGINEER DEVEREAUX!



DEVEREAUX! CAPTAIN RAWLS! YOU'RE BOTH SAFE!

BUT AS THE FOUR RACE DOWN THE CORRIDOR, A SOLID WALL OF VENUSIANS FLING THEMSELVES FORWARD...

GET BACK! THEY'VE FOUND US! IT'S KILL OR BE KILLED NOW!



ONLY FOUR OF US LEFT, OLD BOY! THE REST WERE RAYED DOWN IN THEIR COTS!

IT WON'T BE TOO BAD...IF WE CAN REACH THE COMMUNICATIONS ROOM AND RADARGRAM THE EARTH FLEET!



ATOM BLASTERS TURN THE AIR BLUE WITH BURNING OZONE! IN THE CROWDED QUARTERS, DEATH CLAIMS MANY VICTIMS!

TOO MANY OF THEM! AS FAST AS WE SEAR 'EM DOWN...MORE OF 'EM MOVE UP!



GO ON! GET MOVING! I'LL HOLD THEM BACK! IT'S LITTLE ENOUGH TO DO TO SAVE THIS GATEWAY TO THE GALAXY AND FRANCE!



ENGINEER LOUIS DEVEREAUX IS CUT TO RIBBONS BY VENUSIAN ATOMBURNS-- BUT HE HOLDS THE CORRIDOR!

NO PIG VENUSIANS WILL EVER DROP A BOMB ON MY BELOVED FRANCE... I WILL STOP THEM!



AND WHEN HE FEELS THE COLD FINGERS OF DEATH CLUTCHING AT HIM, HE PULLS WIDE THE STUD OF HIS ATOMIC BLASTER--BLOWING HIMSELF UP!



MEANWHILE, IN THE RADAR CONTROL ROOM...

THEY WEREN'T TAKING ANY CHANCES-- THE ENTIRE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM IS SMASHED!

THAT MEANS WE CAN'T SIGNAL THE FLEET!



THERE'S NO WAY TO STOP THEM--

LOOK-- TWO SHIPS STOPPING TO RE-FUEL! IF THEY COULD SEE US, I CAN WIG WAG TO THEM THROUGH THE WINDOW...



THE SPACE STATION ALSO REFUELS SPACE DREAD-NAUGHTS WITH RADIOACTIVE URANIUM

I'VE GOT THE SIGNAL FLAG! JUST PRAY THEY SEE ME!

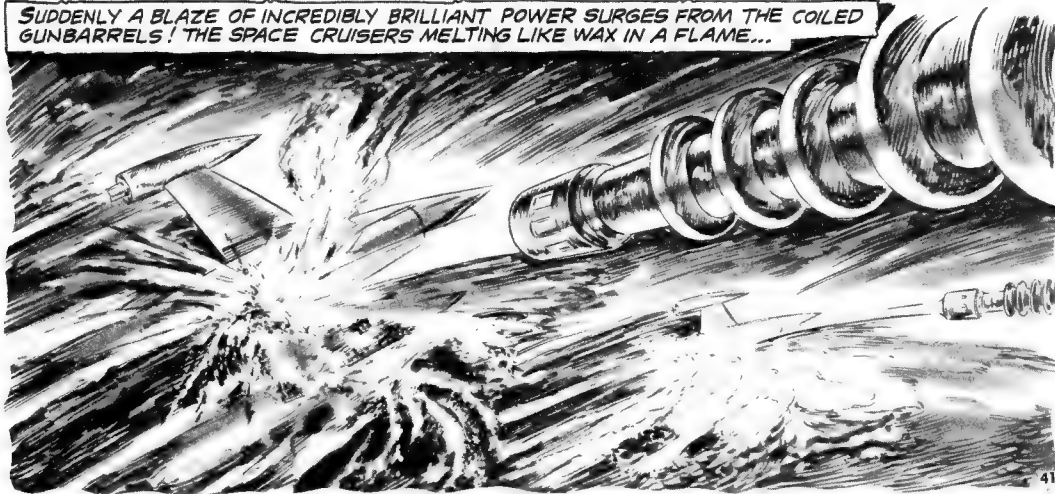


SLEEK RAY GUNS WHIRL IN THEIR GUNPORTS AS THE CRUISERS NEAR THE DOCKS...

THEY CAN'T SEE ME! THEY KEEP ON COMING!



SUDDENLY A BLAZE OF INCREDIBLY BRILLIANT POWER SURGES FROM THE COILED GUNBARRELS! THE SPACE CRUISERS MELTING LIKE WAX IN A FLAME...



IN THE LUXURIOUS OFFICES OF COMMAND
QUARTERS, VENUS' FLEET ADMIRAL SLAR
KAN GRIMLY LAUGHS...

THOSE EARTH
FOOLS! THEY WALKED RIGHT INTO IT!
AND THIS IS ONLY THE
BEGINNING!

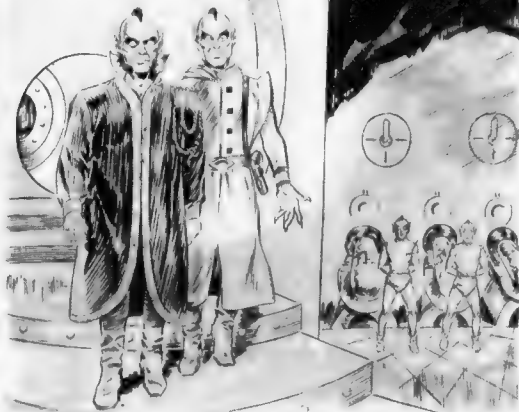


GOOD! SOON THE EARTH'S RICHES WILL
BE OURS! - ALL OF IT! - WE'LL
HAVE WEALTH BEYOND OUR
DREAMS!

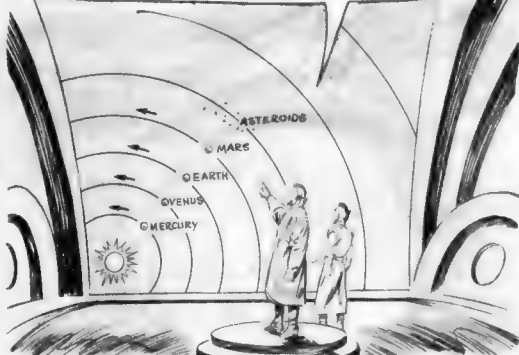


ARE THE ATOM BOMBS
SET? THE FIRING
TUBES READY?

THE BOMBS ARE
SET TO GO!



EARTH--WHICH UNTIL NOW HAS DOMINATED
SOLAR SYSTEM TRADE AND COMMERCE...
IS FINISHED! SHE'LL BE HELPLESS BEFORE
OUR ARMIES AND VENUS WILL BE THE
QUEEN IN INTERPLANETARY SPACE!



DAV, WHAT'LL WE DO? THOSE
SHIPS OUTSIDE... BURNED TO
MOLTEN METAL...
(SOB)!

ONLY ONE THING TO
DO! HE'S GOING TO ATOM
BOMB EARTH'S BIGGEST
CITIES! WE HAVE TO
STOP HIM!



GOT HIM! COME ON... THE
BOMB PORTS ARE THIS
WAY... WE'LL BLOW THEM,
THE SPACE STATION AND
OURSELVES INTO ETERNITY...



BUT THE VENUSIANS HAVE
BEEN WAITING FOR JUST
SUCH A MOVE... AND PREPARE
FOR THE KILL...

WE HAVE
THEM! BURN THE
DIRTY EARTHERS
WITH THE
BLASTER-BEAMS!

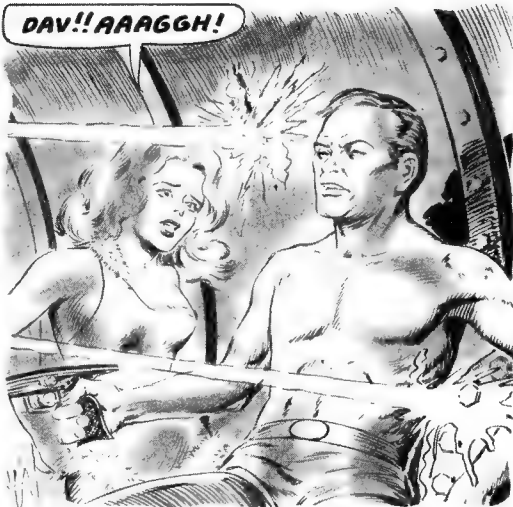


GOT ME...PAIN AWFUL...
LIKE BEING...ON FIRE!

CAPTAIN RAWLS!
DAV--WHAT'LL WE
DO?



DAV!! AAAGGH!



WOUNDED, THE BURN OF A RAY BLAST BLISTERING HIS SKIN, SPACE LIEUTENANT DAV FALLON BITES HIS LIP AGAINST THE PAIN AND SHAKES OFF KATHI...

DAV...YOU'RE HURT!
BADLY HURT! GET
TO COVER!

GOT TO GET AS MANY
OF THEM AS I CAN!



THERE GOES THE LAST ONE IN THIS BATCH!
THE WHOLE WORLD DEPENDS ON US, KATHI!
WE'RE THE ONLY ONES WHO CAN STOP
THEM!

YOU CAN'T BEAT
THEM ALL!



OH, DAV--YOU'RE DONE FOR! ...
DAV, I CAN'T
HOLD YOU
UP!

EVERYTHING'S
GOING BLACK...
WHOLE PLACE...
SHAKING FASTER
AND TURNING FASTER...



MAYBE I CAN DRAG HIM
INTO THIS ROOM... GET
HIM BACK ON HIS FEET!
IF I DON'T--THE
STATION IS FINISHED!



TWO MORE VENUSIANS!
THEY'LL BURN ME DOWN
BEFORE I CAN GET
INSIDE!



HER MUSCLES CRACKING WITH STRAIN, SPACE NURSE KATHI BOONE DRAGS LT. DAV FALLON INTO THE LITTLE ROOM...

THEY'RE RIGHT OUTSIDE!



SHE MADE IT! THERE GOES THE BOLT!

IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE, SLEE TOOM!



THEY'RE LOCKED IN THERE WITH NO PLACE TO GO AND NO WAY OUT! THEY'RE AS GOOD AS DEAD!

NOT ONLY THAT--



LOOK! THE EARTHER DOG DROPPED HIS BLASTER GUN! HE DOESN'T EVEN HAVE A WEAPON, NOW! HE CAN'T STOP US!

HA! HA! HA!



INSIDE THE LOCKED CHAMBER...

LUCKY FOR YOU I HAVE MY NURSES KIT ON MY BELT, DAV FALLON! WE DID EVERYTHING WE COULD-- BUT WE'VE BEEN BEATEN!



THEY BOLTED THE DOOR FROM THE OUTSIDE! CAN'T OPEN IT!



WE'RE ALMOST OVER NEW YORK! THEY'RE GOING TO DROP THEIR BOMBS IN A FEW MINUTES!

ATOM BOMBS ON NEW YORK! ON LONDON, PARIS AND THE GALAXY! AND I CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO STOP 'EM... LOCKED IN HERE LIKE A MOUSE IN A TRAP!



KATHI! WHAT A FOOL I'VE BEEN! LOOK OVER THERE...

WHAT? ALL I SEE ARE THE PRESSURE GAUGES AND ELECTRONIC ATMOSPHERE CONTROLS!



EXACTLY... THESE LEVERS CONTROL THE FLOW OF GASES THAT MAKE UP OUR BREATHABLE ATMOSPHERE! IT'S THE BEST WEAPON I COULD'VE ASKED FOR!



IF WE CUT OFF THE OXYGEN IN THIS ATMOSPHERE, THE VENUSIANS WILL COLLAPSE! BLANK OUT... AND NOT BE ABLE TO FIRE THE BOMB TUBES! AND THE PORTABLE TANKS WILL PROTECT US!



AS SPACE STATION ONE ROCKETS IN ORBIT HIGH ABOVE NEW YORK...

ALL IS READY! GOOD! RELEASE NUMBERS THREE AND FOUR TUBES WHEN I GIVE THE SIGNAL!



BUT THE FACES OF THE VENUSIANS SUDDENLY PALE... HANDS REACH UP TO THROATS... ONE BY ONE THEY START TO COLLAPSE...

THOSE ACCURSED EARTHMEN! THEY'VE REACHED THE ATMOSPHERE ROOM! CUT OFF THE OXYGEN! WE'RE BLACKING OUT!



BUT VENUS FLEET ADMIRAL SLAR KAN STUMBLES! HIS HAND TOUCHES THE PIN RELEASE... BLACKNESS SETTLES OVER HIS BULGING EYES!

CAN'T REACH IT... BLACKING OUT... FAINTING... THE EARTHMAN WON FROM US... WITHOUT A GUN IN HIS HAND...!

AND IN THE ATMOSPHERIC CONTROL ROOM...

WE'LL KEEP 'EM UNCONSCIOUS FOR A WHILE LONGER! A PATROL SHIP WILL DROP MEN ABOARD TO INVESTIGATE, THEN WE'LL BE FREED!



BEST OF ALL... THE STATION IS SAVED!



THE END

WENT TO THE PLACE WITH MY MIND FILLED WITH APPREHENSION AND AFTER ARRIVING, I FELT THAT MY FEARS WERE WELL-FOUNDED... BUT EVEN THEN I HAD NOT SEEN THE...

MONSTER



WELL, WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT HERE?

MY NAME IS CHANNING... MY FIANCEE, MISS KATHERINE NORTON IS SECRETARY TO MR. WENDELL ACTION! SHE IS STAYING AT THIS PLACE AND I WANT TO SEE HER!



THE OLD MAN WENT BACK INTO THE GATEHOUSE AND AFTER WHAT SEEMED AN ETERNITY, CAME BACK SAYING...

COME IN, MR. CHANNING. COME IN! HEH-HEH!

ABOUT TIME, YOU GRINNING OLD COOT!



I HAD NOT LIKED IT FROM THE FIRST BUT KATHY HAD LAUGHED AT ME... "DARLING, IT'S ONLY FOR THE SUMMER! THESE VERMONT HILLS WILL BE SO BEAUTIFUL!" -WELL, THIS WAS MID-NOVEMBER! COLD, GREY MID-NOVEMBER!



I HAD THE FEELING THAT EYES WERE WATCHING ME FROM THE GAPING WINDOWS! WHEN THE DOOR OPENED, A COLD, DAMP DRAFT STRUCK ME... BUT THERE AT THE DOOR WAS...

KATHY!

COME IN, DARLING! WHY DID YOU WORRY ABOUT ME?

YES, KATHY WAS SMILING, BUT IN HER EYES WAS TERROR!

LORD, IT'S COLD IN HERE!

I HADN'T NOTICED, ROY! COME AND MEET MR. ACTION!

MR. ACTION, THIS IS ROY CHANNING, MY FIANCE!

WELCOME, CHANNING! DOUBTLESS YOU HAVE BEEN WONDERING ABOUT KATHY! WELL... BUSINESS, YOU KNOW...

TAKE OFF YOUR HAT AND COAT, CHANNING! YOU'LL GET USED TO THE COLD! IT'S MUCH HEALTHIER... WE NEVER USE FIRES HERE... WELL... I'LL LEAVE YOU WITH KATHY! YOU'LL HAVE THINGS TO TALK ABOUT!

KATHY'S LIPS STILL SMILED WHEN WE WERE ALONE, BUT HER EYES STILL CRIED TERROR...

COME ON, KATHY, I'M TAKING YOU OUT OF THIS PLACE!

OH, ROY! DON'T SAY THAT! I-I'M VERY HAPPY HERE!

I SAID COME ON, KATHY! WE'RE GETTING... UH, WHAT TH...

YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE, CHANNING! YOU'LL NEVER GET OUT OF HERE! **NO ONE** EVER LEAVES THIS PLACE!

BENEATH MY COAT I HAD AN AUTOMATIC IN A SHOULDER HOLSTER BUT I DID NOT GO FOR IT! I JUST STOOD CLENCHING MY FISTS IN FURY...

YOU'LL BE VERY HAPPY HERE, CHANNING! WON'T HE, KATHY?

YOU WON'T
GET AWAY
WITH THIS...

IT'S NECESSARY, CHANNING... THIS DISCIPLINE! YOU
SEE, THERE IS A MONSTER! SOME CALL IT
OCCULT... BUT IT'S-- KATHY, GO TO YOUR ROOM...
I'LL SHOW MR. CHANNING HIS!

ACTION LEFT ME IN MY ROOM! I
STOOD ALONE IN A COLD FURY! THE
WHOLE SINISTER SET-UP WAS
PHONY! YET... WHILE KATHY WAS
IN DANGER, I'D HAVE TO MOVE
WITH UTMOST CAUTION...



PIPE CHANNING!
PUT AWAY THE
PIPE! WE ALLOW
NO FIRE HERE!
NOT EVEN
SMOKING!

THAT DEVIL!
MIRRORS AND
A LOUDSPEAKER
INSIDE THAT
GRILLE! HE
CAN SPY ALL
OVER THE
HOUSE!

I STAYED IN MY ROOM, PONDERING OVER
THIS MADHOUSE! AND ABOUT MIDNIGHT...

IT WAS KATHY! I TORE IT
OPEN AND READ...



AN ENVELOPE
BEING SHOVED
UNDER THE
DOOR!

'AM DOING THIS AT A TERRIBLE
RISK! HE IS MAD, BUT HE CAN
TALK WITH THE MONSTER!
HE CAN PROTECT US FROM
IT! DON'T TRY TO OUTWIT
HIM, DARLING... HE SEES EVERY-
THING! JUST PRAY... PRAY...
PRAY!...



I HAD SCARCELY FINISHED READING
THE NOTE, WHEN...

EEEE! NO! NO!
DON'T WHIP ME!
DON'T WHIP ME!
OW-W-W!
EEEE!

IT'S KATHY'S
VOICE! I'LL
KILL HIM!
I'LL KILL
HIM!

EVEN AS I RUSHED INTO THE
HALL, KATHY'S SCREAMS
STOPPED, AND I DID NOT KNOW
WHERE TO GO! GRIMLY I
RETURNED TO MY ROOM AND
WAITED... WITH DEATH IN
MY HAND!

THE
DOOR'S
OPENING...



THERE ARE NO WORDS TO DESCRIBE IT! THE LUNGING, WEAVING... ANTICIPATING! THE LINE OF FIRE OF MY WEAPON WAS NOW UPON ME...

IT CAME AT ME, CLAWING... SNARLING... DIGGING GREAT CHUNKS OF FLESH! I TRIED TO GET MY GUN INTO POSITION, BUT THE HUGE PAW GRABBED IT...



I FIRED... FELT THE PAW INCH MOMENTARILY AS THE BULLET WENT THROUGH IT! THE GREAT FANGS CAME AT MY THROAT...

THEN A SOFT VOICE...

THIS IS WENDELL ACTION... ACTION CALLING... EASY DOES IT, NOW! COME AWAY, BEAST...



THE VOICE SEEMED TO HAVE A DISTRACTING EFFECT ON IT! IT YANKED THE GUN FROM MY HAND AND TURNED AWAY...

BREAKFAST WAS A STRANGE AFFAIR! UNCOOKED FOOD, CEREAL, FRUIT, SALAD! KATHY THERE WITH WELTS FROM ACTION'S WHIP! ME WITH TORN CLOTHES, A GOUGED BODY... ACTION WITH A HAND WOUND...

I SAVED YOUR LIFE, CHANNING! BELIEVE ME, I DID!

THANKS!

LIAR! YOU'RE THE MONSTER!



I LIVED FOR WEEKS IN THAT PLACE OF HORROR! I WAS TOO ANGRY TO EVEN FEEL THE COLD, YET TOO CAUTIOUS TO ACT IN HASTE, FOR MY EVERY MOVE WAS WATCHED BY ACTION OR HIS SLAVES! MEN AND WOMEN HELD IN FEAR, AS KATHY WAS...

...I SAW UNBELIEVABLE ACTS OF BRUTALITY ON ACTION'S PART... ACTS INCITED ONLY BY HIS WHIMS...



... AND I, TOO BECAME A SLAVE WITH THE OTHERS...



... BUT WHERE THE OTHERS WERE MOTIVATED BY FEAR, MY ACTIONS GREW FROM ANGER AND THE FORMING OF A PLAN...

UNTIL ON A NIGHT NEAR THE END OF ONE MORE WEEK... I HAD ENOUGH WOOD HIDDEN IN MY ROOM TO EFFECT MY SCHEME...



PUT OUT THAT FIRE OR I SHALL NOT BE ABLE TO CONTROL THE MONSTER, CHANNING!

HA-HA-HA! ALL RIGHT, YOU PHONY... LET HIM COME!



IT CAME SCREAMING AND ROARING AS I KNEW IT WOULD... BUT I WAS READY!

I LUNGED WITH FLAME IN MY HAND AND FURY IN MY HEART...

IT FLED AND I FOLLOWED... ALL MY ANGER RISING TO ACTION...



MONSTER

7 FEET TALL IN AUTHENTIC COLORS.

GLOW in the DARK EYES

\$100

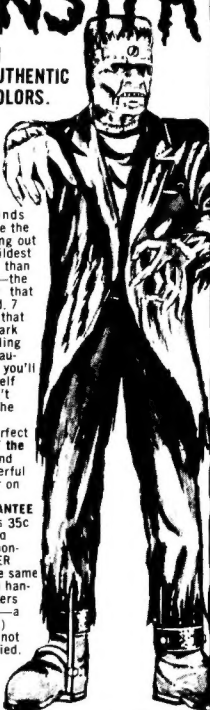
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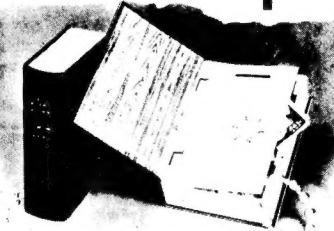
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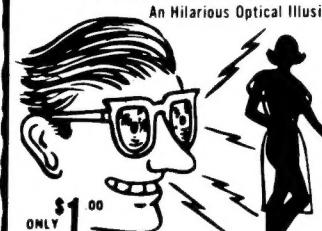
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IT WENT TO THE ROOM I RECOGNIZED AS ACTION'S SPY ROOM REplete WITH ELECTRONIC OBSERVING EQUIPMENT...

IT BECAME A FIGHT TO THE DEATH, AND I WAS WINNING AS HE TRIED TO CONTROL HIS FEAR OF THE FIRE AND MY MADDENING FLURY. I PRESSED MY FULL STRENGTH ON THE MONSTROUS THROAT AND SOON THE GURGLING STOPPED...



KATHY... EVERYONE! IT'S ALL OVER! YOU CAN COME...AND SEE!



KATHY ARRIVED FIRST...

THERE IT IS, KATHY... NO MORE FEAR! IT'S ACTION... THE MONSTER...

BUT... ARE YOU SURE?



OF COURSE... I'LL PULL OFF THE MASK IN A MINUTE...

HE WAS MAD... THE SECRETARY HE ADVERTISED FOR WAS TO REPLACE THE ONE WHO KILLED HERSELF IN TERROR!



HE THOUGHT HE WAS A KING... SOMEONE ALL POWERFUL! AND HE WAS UTTERLY CRUEL, BUT THE OUTSIDE WORLD NEVER SUSPECTED...



I TORE OFF THE "MONSTER" DISGUISE FROM ACTION'S BODY! I HAD KILLED ACTION; BUT AS I TORE THE COVERINGS FROM HIS HANDS AND FACE...

MY GOD! LOOK!!

EEEEEE!!



I HAD GUESSED THAT THE MAN WAS BESTIAL, HENCE HAD A BEAST'S TERROR OF FIRE! THAT WAS MY WEDGE FOR VICTORY! BUT I HAD NEVER GUESSED THAT ACTION'S TRUE NATURE WAS SO MONSTROUS THAT AFTER DEATH HE WOULD BECOME THAT VERY GORGON!

THE END